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TITLE: Addressing HIV/AIDs in the Workplace

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ISSUE: The American workplace has been profoundly affected by HIV/AIDS, and advanced medical treatments promise to bring more challenges. As optimism flourishes, the urgency surrounding the epidemic dissipates, and the resolve to maintain preventive behaviors potentially becomes weaker. Many workplaces are unprepared to address HIV in fair and appropriate ways--through implementation of corporate policies, and adherence to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and, OSHA's Final Bloodborne Pathogens Standard.

SETTING: The workplace remains a crucial point of access to priority audiences and offers an efficient delivery system for primary prevention and control messages.

PROJECT: To address this issue, the U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed the Business Responds to AIDS (BRTA) and Labor Responds to AIDS (LRTA) Program. Through workplace education materials the CDC provides guidance on: 1) how to formulate appropriate workplace policies on HIV/AIDS 2); how to train managers and labor leaders on the issue; 3) how to educate employees/workers; 4) how to help employees/workers educate their families - especially their adolescent children, who are most at risk and 5) how to address HIV/AIDS in the community through service, volunteerism, and philanthropy.

RESULTS: The CEOs and leaders of 50 business and labor organizations have partnered with CDC, serving as Advisors on program design and implementation, and marketers of this initiative. Through a combination of TV Broadcast advertising, targeted out-of-home/airport advertising, and direct mail that communicate on a peer-to-peer basis with CEOs and Human Resource Directors, Clearinghouse volume has increased with BRTA/LRTA inquiries and material requests averaging 400 calls per month and 3000 Web site hits per month.

LESSONS LEARNED: CDC's experience thus far suggests that business and labor is receptive to HIV/AIDS Workplace programs and inclined to consider implementing policies and programs that further their institutional interests and those of their employees/workers, equip managers and labor leaders, and educate employees/workers. In addition, demonstrating buy-in among CEO and Human Resource Directors through mass media and targeted communication materials enhances audience response.

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